



News  
from  
Congressman

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**NORTHERN MICHIGAN HOSPITAL  
FAILS TO COMPLY WITH MEDICARE INFECTION CONTROL STANDARDS**  
*Agency Finds Patient Care at Risk*

WASHINGTON - Congressman Bart Stupak (D-Menominee) today released a report from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) that found Northern Michigan Hospital (NMH) has failed to comply with Medicare requirements for infection control, threatening the health and safety of its patients. The hospital risks losing its Medicare funding if the deficiencies are not immediately corrected.

In a letter dated January 13, 2004, CMS stated that because NMH has not complied with the safety standards for Infection Control and that "a significant deficiency exists, your hospital [NMH] is no longer deemed to meet the Medicare Conditions of Participation and is now under the survey of the Michigan Department of Community Health, Bureau of Health Systems."

In a letter dated December 4, 2003, Congressman Stupak asked CMS to join the Michigan Department of Consumer and Industry Services (MDCIS) in conducting this survey after concerns were raised on this issue by the Governor's September 2003 Blue Ribbon Panel Report.

"My motive for requesting this CMS survey was to ensure the health and safety of all patients that utilize Northern Michigan Hospital," said Stupak. "The Governor's Blue Ribbon Panel raised safety concerns in its report and many area residents have also contacted my office about the lack of adequate, safe patient care received at NMH. In each deficiency cited by CMS, infection control and safe patient care were not provided. I believe that could have been prevented with proper supervision from experienced nurses who know proper medical protocol and patient care."

The CMS letter to NMH outlines nine areas of deficient patient care. They include (paraphrased):

- Poor oversight of nursing care of patients.
- Failure of nursing staff to keep current nursing care plans for each patient.
- Lapses in preparing and administering prescription drugs to patients.
- Failure to ensure that outdated and mislabeled drugs were not available to patients. (Example: insulin was stored unrefrigerated; opened insulin bottles were not labeled for expiration, which expires 30 days after being opened).
- Inadequate measures and monitoring to ensure a sanitary environment to prevent the spread of infections and communicable diseases.

- more -

NMH release

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As a result of these findings, CMS and the Michigan Department of Community Health, Bureau of Health Systems will follow with another survey to determine how NMH has addressed these issues and if there are other problems in patient care. Stupak also said he plans to share the concerns that he has heard from constituents about the quality of care they received at NMH.

"I believe these serious health concerns could have been avoided if NMH had negotiated and brought back their experienced nurses. Northern Michigan Hospital once enjoyed a sterling medical reputation, but that has rapidly deteriorated since losing many of their nurses to the strike and the subsequent employment of visiting nurses who are unfamiliar with hospital policies and procedures," said Stupak. "I will continue to monitor the patient care at Northern Michigan Hospital to protect the health and safety of all patients and protect taxpayer's investment in health care in Northwestern Lower Michigan."

\* The full CMS report is available upon request.

**An actuality on this issue is available at 202-225-0782, menu option #10**